

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A plastic molded container, comprising:
 - a bowl comprising an upper rim, a bottom and a sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom,
 - the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section, and an upper frustum section, the sidewall having curvilinear transitions from the upper frustum section to the narrow mid-section and from the narrow mid-section to the lower frustum section,
 - the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section having a volume larger than a volume of the upper frustum section,
 - the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to the mid-section,
 - the upper rim defining **a maximum width of the container an opening having a diameter that is at least as large as a widest interior diameter of the container**, and
 - the container being constructed such that it is capable of resisting permanent deformation when used in a hot fill or retort process.

Claim 2. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 further comprising a lid securable to the upper rim.

Claim 3. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 2 further comprising a recess disposed between the upper frustum section and the upper rim,
the lid further comprising a lower lip,
the recess for receiving the lower lip of the lid.

Claim 4. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 wherein the lid is rotatably securable to the rim.

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Claim 5. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 wherein the container is molded from a plastic selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, polyethyleneterephthalate, high density polyethylene, polycarbonate, polystyrene and polypropylene.

Claim 6. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 wherein the container is blow-molded from a single layer plastic.

Claim 7. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 wherein the container is blow-molded from a multi-layer plastic.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The plastic molded container of claim 7 wherein said multi-layer plastic further comprises at least one gas barrier layer selected from the group consisting of polyvinylidenechloride, nylon, and ethylenevinylalcohol copolymer.

Claim 9. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 wherein the container has a diameter and a height, the diameter being greater than the height.

Claim 10. (original) The plastic molded container of claim 1 wherein the bottom comprises a downwardly extending circular standing ridge.

Claim 11. (withdrawn) A method of forming a plastic container comprising the steps of:
providing two mold halves, each mold half having a cavity defining one-half of the container which comprises a bowl comprising an upper rim, a bottom and a sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom, the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section and an upper frustum section, the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to mid-section, the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to mid-section;
abutting the two mold halves together;
blowing plastic material into the abutted mold halves under blow molding conditions;
separating the mold halves; and
extracting the resultant container.

Claim 12. (withdrawn) The method of claim 11 wherein the plastic material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, polyethyleneterephthalate, high density polyethylene, polycarbonate, polystyrene and polypropylene.

Claim 13. (withdrawn) The method of claim 11 wherein the plastic material comprises a single layer plastic.

Claim 14. (withdrawn) The method of claim 11 wherein the plastic material comprises a multi-layer plastic.

Claim 15. (withdrawn) The method of claim 14 wherein said multi-layer plastic further comprises at least one gas barrier layer selected from the group consisting of polyvinylidenechloride, nylon, and ethlyenevinylalcohol copolymer.

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Claim 16. (withdrawn) The method of claim 11 wherein the container has a diameter and a height, the diameter being greater than the height.

Claim 17. (withdrawn) The method of claim 11 wherein the bottom comprises a downwardly extending circular standing ridge.

Claim 18. (withdrawn) A method of forming a plastic container comprising the steps of providing a three piece mold, each mold piece having a cavity defining one-third of the container which comprises a bowl comprising an upper rim, a bottom and a sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom, the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section and an upper frustum section, the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to mid-section, the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to mid-section;

abutting the three mold pieces together;

blowing plastic material into the abutted mold pieces under blow molding conditions;

separating the mold pieces; and

extracting the resultant container.

Claim 19. (withdrawn) A method of hot-filling a container, comprising the steps of providing a plastic container comprising a blow comprising an upper rim, a bottom and a sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom, the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section and an upper frustum section, the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to mid-section, the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to mid-section; positioning the container within a receptacle; filling the container with material under hot filling conditions; sealing the container with a suitable seal member; and securing a lid on the container.

Claim 20. (withdrawn) A method of retorting material disposed within a container, comprising the steps of:

providing a plastic container comprising a bowl comprising an upper rim, a bottom and a sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom, the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section and an upper frustum section, the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to mid-section, the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to mid-section;

positioning the container within a receptacle;
filling the container with material under ambient or near ambient conditions;
securing a lid on the container;
sealing the container with a suitable seal member;
heating the container, material, lid and seal member.

Claim 21. (previously presented) The plastic molded container of claim 1, wherein the container is a blow-molded container and includes an oxygen barrier layer.

Claim 22. (previously presented) The plastic molded container of claim 1, wherein the container is capable of withstanding retort conditions without significant residual distortion.

Claim 23. (previously presented) The plastic molded container of claim 1, wherein said sidewalls comprise a plurality of layers, one of which is an oxygen barrier layer.

Claim 24. (currently amended) A plastic molded container comprising:

 a bowl comprising an upper rim, a bottom and sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom,

 the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section, and an upper frustum section, the sidewall having curvilinear transitions from the upper frustum section to the narrow mid-section and from the narrow mid-section to the lower frustum section,

 the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section having a volume larger than a volume of the upper frustum section,

 the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to the mid-section,

 the container being constructed such that it is capable of resisting permanent deformation when used in a hot fill or retort process,

 the upper rim defining a maximum width of the container ~~an opening having a diameter that is at least as large as a widest interior diameter of the container~~,

 the sidewall being made of blow-molded materials, and the container having at least one oxygen barrier layer.

Claim 25. (currently amended) A plastic molded container comprising:

a bowl comprising an upper rim, a bottom and sidewall extending between the upper rim and the bottom, the sidewall comprising a lower frustum section, a narrow mid-section, and an upper frustum section, the sidewall having curvilinear transitions from the upper frustum section to the narrow mid-section and from the narrow mid-section to the lower frustum section,

the lower frustum section connecting the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section decreasing in width as the lower frustum section extends from the bottom to the mid-section, the lower frustum section having a volume larger than a volume of the upper frustum section,

the upper frustum section connecting the upper rim to the mid-section, the upper frustum section decreasing in width as the upper frustum section extends from the upper rim to the mid-section,

the container having a widest diameter and a height, the widest diameter being greater than the height,

the upper rim defining a maximum width of the container ~~an opening having a diameter that is at least as large as a widest interior diameter of the container~~,

the container being constructed such that it is capable of resisting permanent deformation when used in a hot fill or retort process, and

the sidewall having a plurality of layers, at least one of which is an oxygen barrier layer.